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**Office of Training
INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTION COURSE
Course Research Paper**

**Methods of Communicating Intelligence Information
Outside the Intelligence Community**

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21 December 1964

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this paper is to explore the ways in which the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) communicates unclassified information to the public, primarily the academic community. One fundamental question which is central to the whole problem is the question of whether the Agency should make unclassified information available outside of the intelligence community. The first portion of the paper is devoted to a discussion of this question and the major body of the paper discusses the programs and procedures for making information available.

Conclusions

The most noticeable fact that has emerged from the research is that there is no general policy which defines the obligations of the Agency to release unclassified information. There are many independent policies which govern individual programs or procedures. There is no question, of course, about the release of classified information. It is prohibited. There is a large amount of unclassified material, however, which the Agency has by virtue of its collection responsibilities, and the release of which would not affect the national security other than in exceptional circumstances. In many instances this material is made available on a broad scale, and the presumption would seem to be in favor of its dissemination. However, the fact remains that there is no general policy statement to cover this grey area of CIA responsibility.

The primary factor which determines whether information should be disseminated is the sensitivity of the source used in the compilation of the information. This is the reason that the Office of Research and

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Reports/Economic Research Area (ORA/ERA) and the Office of Central Reference (OCR) disseminate more information than any other component of the Agency. ERA utilizes overt sources extensively in the preparation of its reports, and OCR stores a large amount of overt material. Other components utilize sensitive source material to a much greater extent. Consequently, they are not readily able to declassify their products and prepare them for dissemination outside the intelligence community.

There is a presumption in favor of releasing unclassified intelligence information outside the intelligence community as long as it does not involve too many extra man-hours of effort. There is a belief that the availability of this information to scholars and researchers will improve the product of their research, and that this in turn will benefit the Agency in those instances where it is a consumer of the publications which result from such external research.

Some people believe that a logical result of the collection of information is to make it available for public use if it is not classified. Others believe that since the primary role of the CIA is to advise the President on intelligence matters affecting the national security the Agency has no business devoting its resources to supplying information to the public.

One of the major functions fulfilled by the dissemination of unclassified reports is to improve the image of the Agency. Generally, this is the case when the intent is to improve the image of the competence of the Agency's production components. Originally, for example,

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recruiters for ERA used ERA reports to demonstrate the level of competence of the writing and analysis in ERA to potential employees.

The advantages and disadvantages enumerated by Mr. Otto Guthe, Assistant Director for Research and Reports, in a 1960 memorandum remain essentially the same. In some cases they hold true for components other than ERA. It is apparent, however, that whereas the disadvantages are usually obvious the advantages are not. The response of the academic community has been very favorable to the dissemination of the ERA reports, and the materials made available by OCR are widely used. The reports still assist the ERA recruiters in their tasks. Some of the disadvantages are hard to measure. It is easy to evaluate the response to the publication of a report such as the one on Soviet GNP which appeared in January 1964.

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The fundamental mission of the Central Intelligence Agency is to advise the President on intelligence matters affecting the national security. Thus, the question of whether CIA has any responsibility to communicate the intelligence that it has collected and produced to anyone other than the President or his offices, is a legitimate one.

When intelligence or intelligence information is released, it involves a certain amount of manpower that perhaps could more properly be devoted to the fulfillment of the primary mission which has been assigned to the Agency. For example, when a report from ERA is distributed, it must be sanitized and declassified. This involves x-number of man-hours for each report. Then, extra copies must be printed for distribution. This involves an expense above and beyond the normal operating expense of the office. When the report is distributed, more man-hours are expended. The question is thus raised: Does a net advantage accrue to CIA as a result of the release of this information? Some people believe it does, but this cannot be positively demonstrated.

On the other hand, it is argued that the existence of a well-informed American public is essential to the successful conduct of good government. Those elements of intelligence information and intelligence which are not classified can assist in improving the information level of the public without doing harm to the sources by which the intelligence is obtained. Consequently, such information should be disseminated.

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There is no established policy with regard to the release of intelligence and intelligence information, either inside the Agency or, to this writer's knowledge, inside the US Government. This is partially the result of the disagreement outlined above. Consequently, intelligence is communicated to the public on an ad hoc basis, in response to a quid pro quo, or to serve an expedient. The power to decide whether and when information should be released resides in different locations at different times. On some occasions, the President himself may authorize the release of certain information. In other situations it may be the Director or a Deputy Director, and in still others it may be an Assistant Director. In general, it appears that intelligence is released according to the sensitivity of the sources employed in obtaining it. Thus, those areas which primarily utilize overt sources in the preparation of their product are the ones which disseminate the most, and those areas which employ covert sources almost exclusively, disseminate very little, if any. Although there is no explicit policy directive or statement with regard to the release of information, most units operate on the implied assumption that they should disseminate where it is possible. The situation needs clarification.

DDI/ORA/ERA

Almost all of the finished intelligence reports that are disseminated outside the intelligence community originate in ERA. This is the result

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of two major factors. The first is that the Central Intelligence Agency, i.e., LLI/OHR/ERA, is the only government or private institution which does extensive and organized research on the economies of the countries of the Sino-Soviet Bloc. It is true that private organizations and universities do engage to some extent in this analysis. However, none has the resources, the sources, or the ability to apply mass-analysis techniques to the problem as does CIA. The second factor is that in the analysis of the bloc economies, open sources are utilized more extensively than they are in other areas of research. Consequently, the dissemination of reports published by ERA does not endanger the sources of intelligence.

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The program for the dissemination of unclassified ERA research publications to academic institutions and research centers had its inception at a meeting of the Senior Economic Advisory Panel on 11 September 1959 at which the Director and the Deputy Director for Intelligence (LLI) were present.¹ At that meeting some of the members of the Panel pointed out that it would be extremely useful if that part of the academic community which was devoting its efforts to the study of the Sino-Soviet Bloc were able to make use of some of the products of the research

¹This is a non-governmental consultative board which meets with representatives of ERA on occasion. For further discussion see below.

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undertaken within the Agency. The Director (Allen Dulles) concurred in this view and "with considerable enthusiasm" asked that every effort be made to declassify selected research reports for such dissemination.

As a result of this meeting a memorandum was written by Dr. Otto E. Guthe, Assistant Director for Research and Reports, for the LLI and submitted to him on 9 March 1960. In this memorandum, Dr. Guthe outlined what he perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of disseminating the unclassified reports. Essentially, Dr. Guthe believed that CIA would benefit by the release of these reports to selected persons in the academic community because these persons and institutions would be able to produce a better product for the consumption of CIA if their research were based on evaluated background data, some of which could be provided only by CIA. He also believed that it would help to correct any misimpressions held by the public with regard to Sino-Soviet economic activities. In addition, it was hoped that the high standards exercised by the Agency in economic research would be recognized, and the liberal publication policy of the Agency in the field of economic research would be demonstrated to prospective recruits.

Dr. Guthe balanced his memorandum with several disadvantages. He said that recipients and others may misunderstand the purpose of the dissemination of the reports and consequently underestimate the Agency's effort in this field. He also believed that the press and congressional committees might take issue with the conclusions of the Agency, and that some individual researchers and representatives of the press, who are not on the recipient list, might request copies. This could cause

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embarrassment to the Agency.

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Dr. Guthe concluded, however, that on balance the advantages outweighed the disadvantages.

It is interesting to note that two of the disadvantages which Dr. Guthe listed in the 1960 memo were realized in January and February 1964 when an unclassified report was released to the press, albeit in a manner that was different from what was originally intended. Selected representatives of the press were given copies of a report on Soviet GNP. Other representatives requested copies likewise. This resulted in a considerable amount of publicity for the Agency in the press, not all of it favorable. In addition, some members of the press and some members of the academic community took exception to the conclusions reached by the Agency. The congressional committees supported the conclusions of the Agency (This is not surprising, however, in view of the fact that much of the data base on which congressional committees draw their conclusions reached them via the CIA/more about this below).

The major purpose of the dissemination program has not changed considerably. The program serves additional functions now, but the original purpose has remained. The first economic reports that were seen by any eyes other than those within the intelligence community were hand-carried by the personnel recruiters of ORR/ERA, and were intended to assist them in fulfilling their function. The recruiter was permitted to take one or two of the unclassified reports with him as he went to

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the various universities to talk to prospective economists who were interested in working for CIA. He showed the reports as an example of the type of work that was done in the Agency.

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The main criteria

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for the report were that it contain unclassified source material and that its style of writing, level of analysis, and conclusions be sufficiently sophisticated that the report would not embarrass the Agency. These criteria continue to be important. The original purpose of showing the reports outside the intelligence community remains also, but the additional functions enumerated by Dr. Guthe in his 1960 memorandum are performed too.

The number of reports disseminated by ERA is small in relation to the number of reports it produces. The largest number disseminated in any one year was in the first year--1960. This was because a backlog of relevant reports existed which could be disseminated during a relatively short period of time. Since that year, the number of reports has declined to approximately eight or nine per year as compared with 14 in 1960. The total number thus far distributed (as of November 1964) is 48.²

All of the reports disseminated by ERA have been unclassified. Overt sources were used in their preparation and they contain no otherwise sensitive information. Theoretically, they are tightly controlled when they leave the Agency. They are placed on the reference shelves of

²See Appendix I.

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the libraries to which they are sent and are not available for circulation.

Each report has two controls:

This report has been loaned to the recipient by the Central Intelligence Agency. When it has served its purpose it should be destroyed or returned to the

CIA Librarian
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D.C.

And:

Not to be reproduced in whole or in part without the permission of the Central Intelligence Agency.

In actuality, however, it was pointed out to this writer that the Agency probably would not take any legal action against an author who quoted from the report. A letter would be written to him pointing out that he was not expected to do so. The only concrete retaliation the Agency has, therefore, is to remove his name from the list of recipients.

The subject matter included in those reports which have been distributed varies considerably. As one might expect, all of the reports whether their particular focus is the mineral base of the economy of the USSR, or a study of the agriculture of China, relate to the economy of the Sino-Soviet Bloc. They vary in length from 18 to 118 pages.

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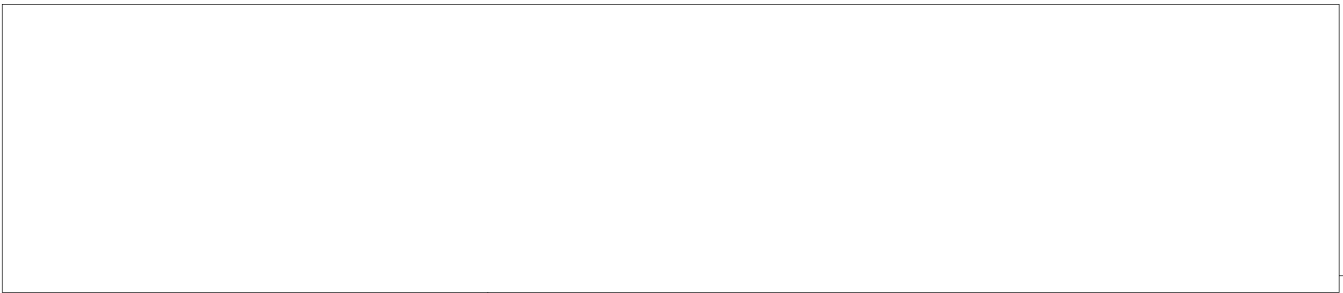
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DDI/OCR

The role of the Office of Central Reference (OCR) in the communication of intelligence information outside the intelligence community takes a very different form from that of ORR/ERA. There are no programs whereby information reports are released, since OCR does not produce any finished intelligence reports, 

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 In addition, the material made available by OCR does not relate only to the Sino-Soviet Bloc as does ERA. It includes all of the world. However, considerable unclassified information which the Agency obtains because of its collection responsibilities is made available to the public through a variety of means.

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 Approximately 150,000 pieces per month are collected in the form of books, periodicals, newspapers, and pamphlets. CIA retains approximately 65% of the material and the balance is distributed to other government agencies. Nearly 95% of the information is available to the academic community through the Library of Congress, the Library of the Department of Agriculture, the Library of Medicine, and

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others. These libraries can contact the CIA Library for the publications which they do not have.

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Scholars and others who are interested in unclassified information on the Soviet Union are able to learn of its existence and availability by means of the Monthly Index of Russian Accessions (MIRA). This is an unclassified publication published by the Government Printing Office (GPO). The MIRA is a list compiled by a central office located in the Library of Congress. Government and academic institutions which receive Russian publications indicate such receipt to the office, which then compiles the MIRA.

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A less formal method of making information available outside the intelligence community is support for the compilation and publication of a World List of Future International Meetings in the field of the sciences and social sciences. This listing is made available to the public through the GPO. It is hoped that through meetings such as these that ideas and information can be collected and exchanged.

An extensive program of translation of Soviet publications is monitored by CIA through the Foreign Documents Division. Most of the translation is accomplished through contract work, but many of the translated publications are made available to researchers through the Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) of the Department of Commerce.

Finally, OCR assists in the publication of the National Intelligence Survey Gazetteer. This is a definitive gazetteer of all place names in the world. It is monitored by the Office of Basic Intelligence. It is available without attribution to the public in limited numbers through the GPO.

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Response of the Academic Community

The response of the academic community to the dissemination of information has on the whole been overwhelmingly favorable. The most notable exception to this generalization is the response to the publication of the CIA estimate on the performance of the Soviet economy, which appeared in January 1964. This response was governed, however, more by incredulity than by disfavor.

Several books about the Agency have appeared in the past few years. Although most of the authors are concerned with the collection and operations side of intelligence rather than with the production of intelligence, they have displayed different impressions as to the

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effectiveness of the people working on production. A book by Harry H. Ransom which appeared in 1958 indicated that:

In the early days of CIA's existence, employment with that agency was not highly regarded in many of the academic faculties training Ph.D's. A standard quip, when employment opportunities were being discussed, was the sarcastic comment: "Well there's always the CIA."³

However, in a book that was perhaps more critical of the Agency, by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, which appeared in 1964, the authors said:

Despite the possible loss of academic freedom, most universities and professors have shown little reluctance to work for the CIA. The agency has been able to obtain the services of almost all of the academic institutions and individuals it has approached.⁴

Whatever else this may mean, it does indicate that a considerable segment of the academic community presently regards CIA, especially the production end, in a relatively favorable light. What the role of the reports that have been disseminated has been in improving the image of the Agency cannot be evaluated with any certainty. It may be assumed, however, that they have contributed a great deal. The methods of communicating intelligence information to the public have on the whole been successful in attaining their intended purpose.

³H.H. Ransom, Central Intelligence and National Security, (Cambridge, 1960).

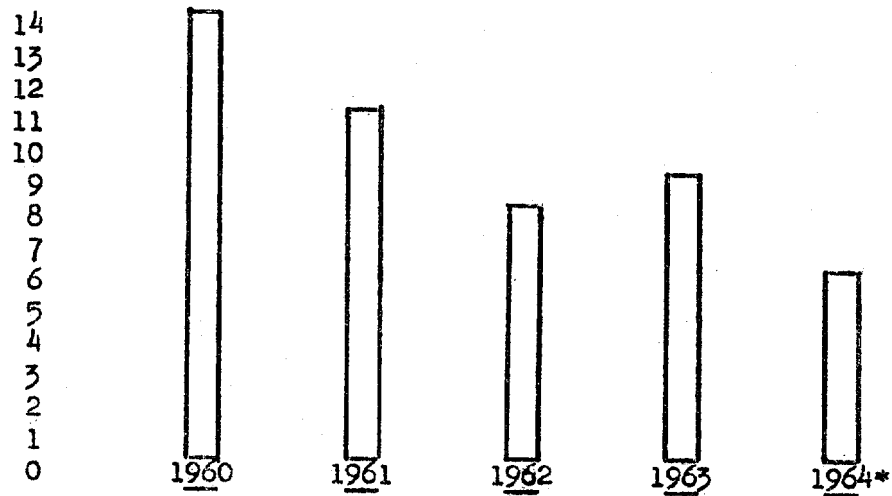
⁴D. Wise and T.B. Ross, The Invisible Government, (New York, 1964).

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APPENDIX I

Number of Reports Disseminated to the Academic Community by ORR/ERA.



*As of November 1964.

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